London Mission
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Volume 55 : Oct - DEC 2010

THE JUNIOR GOLD AWARD

'SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY'

WINNER OF THE COMMONWEALTH PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Photographer: Ms. Kimberly Sue
Location: San Fernando Hill, Trinidad

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Message from H.E. President George Maxwell Richards on the Occasion of Divali 2010

pictured: *His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards TC, CMT, Ph.D delivers remarks at the Annual Divali Nagar Celebrations by the National Council of Indian Culture at the Divali Nagar site, Chaguanas, Trinidad.*

As the people of Trinidad and Tobago celebrate Divali, this is an opportune moment for the nation to reflect, once again, on the powerful themes underlying this festival: the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil and enlightenment over ignorance.

This festival is celebrated across the world not only by Hindus but also by Sikhs and Jains. In our country, while there is one public holiday, celebrations now span more than a week, with symbolic meaning for activities during that period.

There is the ritual of "cleaning house" whether that house is a physical structure which we clean and decorate or our own selves as we fast, pray, reflect and resolve to rededicate our lives to all that is positive and to do so with due concern for those less fortunate than ourselves.

Time is given to the pouring of libations, to prayer and the reinforcement of relationships, as we celebrate our brothers and sisters and petition for their continued protection.

The lighting of the deyas provides a fitting high point as it always serves to remind us of the transforming power of lights, even the smallest dispelling darkness. How much more are our combined lights of truth, integrity, respect, diligence, caring, balance, fair play, devotion to duty, to name a few virtues, able to overcome the several ills that we face, when some among us do not manifest our better selves or when we ourselves fail!

Whether we are celebrating the triumphant return of Lord Rama with his wife Sita to Ayodhya, or Lord Krishna's successful release of the imprisoned princesses, the victory over King Bolai, or the marriage of Lord Vishnu to Goddess Lakshmi, the constant thread throughout this festival is sacrifice of self for others.

> "We celebrate enlightenment and this should be an inspiration to us all, lighting the lamp of knowledge within us. Even the sweets associated with this festival remind us of the child within a thought that we would do well to draw on, from time to time."

We celebrate enlightenment and this should be an inspiration to us all, lighting the lamp of knowledge within us. Even the sweets associated with this festival remind us of the child within; a thought that we would do well to draw on, from time to time.

The universal values that attach to this celebration are significant for all of us, regardless of religious persuasion and even in the absence of it. There are human considerations of which we are reminded during this season and which we should heed, if we are to lift ourselves constantly and keep above the baser instincts of human behaviour.

There are issues that threaten to deflect us from the higher purpose of our existence, but we should keep focus on such guiding principles as respect for the dignity of every human being, gratitude for the opportunities that we have been given as we journey in this life, including the opportunity to lift others as we climb.

We should use this festival of Divali as a reminder to keep on course as we build a better Trinidad and Tobago, contributing thereby to a better world.

Happy Divali to all of Trinidad and Tobago! May God bless our nation!

George Maxwell Richards

pictured: *Their Excellencies President George Maxwell Richards and Dr. Jean Ramjohn-Richards arrive at the Prime Minister's Divali celebration at the Diplomatic Centre, St Ann's, Trinidad.*

(above) The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister.

Message from the Hon. Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Kamla Persad-Bissessar on the Occasion of EID-UL-ADHA 2010

I wish to extend greetings to the Muslim Community and the nation on the celebration of Eid-ul-Adha, which will be observed in Trinidad and Tobago on Wednesday 17th November 2010.

In the religion of Islam the first celebration is Eid-ul-Fitr. This is celebrated at the end of fasting during the month of Ramadan. The second festival is called Eid-ul-Adha, or the festival of sacrifice. This festival, according to Islam, is of greater significance than Eid-ul-Fitr, hence it has also been called Eid-ul-Kabir.

The festival of Eid-ul-Adha is celebrated throughout the Muslim world, as a commemoration of Prophet Abraham's trials and sacrifices. It is a reminder of the importance of principles, such as equality, humility, sincerity, selflessness and concern for the less fortunate. Eid-ul-Adha teaches us that we share a common bond of humanity and that we should try to work together as one people for the good of all.

Eid-ul-Adha reminds us of the sacrifices made by the Muslim Community in every sphere of life for the uplift of our beloved country Trinidad and Tobago.

Our Muslim brothers and sisters have toiled very hard for the development of our beloved country. In all strata of human development, our Muslim brothers and sisters have stood side by side with the rest of the citizens of this great nation to make it what it is today. I therefore salute the Muslim Community for their great contribution for the development of our beloved nation, Trinidad and Tobago.

Today, Muslims in this country enjoy many privileges and are allowed to worship freely without interference and to establish places of worship without any hindrance, obstruction, prejudice or discrimination. We should all try to emulate the fine example set by our ancestors in this regard.

The religion of Islam is more than a body of rituals, customs and traditions. As with all religions, it teaches us how to uplift our character, purify our souls, and so make us better human beings. Let us use this opportunity to serve others, to make our neighbourhoods, our communities and our country a better and a safer place for everyone. This is the real proof of the presence of religion and spirituality in our society. Serve God by serving His Creation. Be an agent of God's Love and Mercy. Do good, as Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace) advised.

"Spread Peace, feed the poor, pray a small part of the night and you will enter Paradise." [Hadith]

Once again on behalf of the People's Partnership Government and the People of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, I would like to wish all Muslims a blessed Eid-ul-Adha.

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar visits Commonwealth Secretariat

The Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, was briefed on the work of Commonwealth Secretariat during a visit to Malborough House, the headquarters of the Commonwealth Secretariat, on Tuesday 12th October, 2010.

Secretariat staff updated the Chair on several aspects of the Secretariat's development work in governance, human rights, legal and constitutional, political and youth affairs as mandated by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting last year in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The Chair was also briefed on administrative, financial and personnel-related issues.

During the meeting, the Chair commented: "There is tremendous value in holding together as a Commonwealth of nations. There is so much to share.

"We stand by to work with you. I pay tribute to your hard working staff and I urge you to continue with the work you have been doing."

The Secretariat's team highlighted its work on tackling the debt challenges of small and vulnerable countries, with a view to working with the multilateral development banks on options for debt relief. They also spoke of plans to host a meeting in 2011 on practical ways for countries to access funding to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Secretariat's Human Rights Unit highlighted its work behind the scenes with governments and civil society to defend human rights and cause change, before the Deputy Secretary-General, Ransford Smith, outlined plans for non-communicable diseases to be the focus of the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting in 2011.

The Chair commended the Commonwealth's youth programmes to actively engage young people in the association, while adding her own recommendations. Her comments also centred on the Commonwealth's work to assist member countries to address both drugs and small arms trafficking, which were both addressed at the Commonwealth Senior Law Officers Meeting from 18th to 20th October, 2010.

While in London the Chair opened a two-day Commonwealth Economic Partnerships Forum, organised by the Commonwealth Business Council, to identify areas of action to maximise the benefits of economic co-operation in relation to trade and investment within the Commonwealth.

The Chair was accompanied by Dr. the Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and The Honourable Stephen Cadiz, Minister of Trade and Industry.

INTRODUCING HIS EXCELLENCY GARVIN EDWARD TIMOTHY NICHOLAS

HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

H.E. Garvin Nicholas arrived on December 5th, 2010, to take up his duties as High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the Court of St. James's. His educational and professional experiences span the fields of Law, Politics, Finance, Philanthropy and Communications. He served as Trinidad and Tobago's first ever Press Secretary and as the High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland also holds accreditation to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Germany.

Garvin Nicholas began his tertiary studies at ROYTEC with a Certificate in Financial Management from the American Management Association. He then moved to England where he studied for and obtained his Bachelor of Laws at the Oxford Brookes University and Post Graduate legal studies at the Inns of Court School of Law.

Since then, Mr. Nicholas has been called to the Bar of England and Wales, the Bar of Trinidad and Tobago, and most recently to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the Eastern Caribbean (Anguilla). His background in the field of Law opened many doors for him and he expanded his professional experience by working as an Employment Law Consultant in London, a Legal Consultant and a Barrister, all contributing to his private practice as an Attorney-at-Law and as a Door Tenant of 3PB Barristers' Chambers in the UK.

Always one concerned with the development of his community and country, Mr. Nicholas co-founded the Diego Martin East Charitable Foundation during his four year tenure as the elected Local Government Councillor for the Diego Martin Regional Corporation. He has served in the capacities of Temporary Senator on three occasions, Legal Counsel to the Leader of the Opposition and then as Political Leader of the Movement for National Development a party he founded. Most recently he contested the General Election of 2010 and garnered 8,077 votes coming within 472 votes of winning the seat.

(above) His Excellency Garvin Edward Timothy Nicholas, High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Former President and still an active member of the Rotary Club of Port of Spain West, Mr. Nicholas continues to work towards national development. He has been recognized by the Diego Martin Regional Corporation, the Rotary International and Trinity College by way of awards for his work in the community.

A certified scuba diver, avid lover of golf, football and debating, Mr. Nicholas is truly a man of many accomplishments.

T&T take home six medals in Commonwealth Games 2010

The Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2010 were hosted in New Delhi, India from 3rd to 14th October 2010. Seventy one countries competed in various sporting events. The following Trinidad and Tobago athletes took home a total of 6 medals:

Mr. Roger Daniel and Mr. Rodney Allen (Bronze Medal, The Men's Pairs 50m Pistol): On 4th October 2010, both athletes won the first medal for Trinidad and Tobago in the 19th Commonwealth Games in Delhi, India. At the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range, the duo scored 1081 points to win the precious medal. The pair representing Singapore, Swee Hon Lim and Bin Gai won the shooting range event with a total of 1,094 points, 12 points off the Games record whilst India's Omkar Singh and Deepak Sharma came in second place with a total of 1,087 points. This was Trinidad and Tobago's third ever shooting medal. Bert Manhin won Trinidad and Tobago's first shooting medal in the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, Canada while Mr. Daniel collected the second at the 2006 Games in Melbourne, Australia.

Ms. Ayanna Alexander (Silver Medal, The Women's Triple Jump Final): On October 8th 2010, Ayanna Alexander's best leap of 13.91 metres earned her the silver medal for Trinidad and Tobago finishing ahead of Ms. Tabia Charles representing Canada who placed third with 13.84 metres. Ms. Trecia Smith representing Jamaica successfully defended her Commonwealth Games triple jump title, winning gold with a season-best leap of 14.19 metres.

01

Mr. Aaron Armstrong (Bronze Medal, Men's 100m Medal): On October 8th 2010, Aaron Armstrong became the sixth person from Trinidad and Tobago to secure a Commonwealth 100m medal, when he crossed the finish line in 10.24 seconds, edging his teammate Emmanuel Callender (10.25) into fourth spot.

02

In 1954, Mike Agostini grabbed gold for T&T in the 100 yards. Twelve years later, Edwin Roberts earned bronze in the same event. Hasely Crawford claimed 100m bronze in 1970 and again in 1978. Ato Boldon emerged as Commonwealth Games sprint champion at the 1998 Games. And four years ago, Marc Burns won the 100m bronze.

Mrs. Cleopatra Borel Brown (Silver Medal, Women's Shot Put): On October 9th 2010, Mrs. Brown placed second with a shot put throw of 19.03 metres. Ms. Valerie Adams of New Zealand won the women's shot put gold medal with a new Commonwealth Games record throw of 20.47 metres. Ms. Tasele Satupai representing Samoa placed third with a shot put throw of 16.43 metres.

Mr. Tariq Abdul Haqq (Silver Medal, Heavyweight +91Kg Boxing): On October 13th 2010, Tariq Abdul Haqq after putting forward a valiant effort in the heavyweight +91kg boxing bout at The Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi, was defeated by Paramjeet Samota, representing India. Paramjeet Samota of India won 5-1.

Mr. Roger Peter Daniel (Silver Medal, 25m Standard Pistol Men): On October 13th 2010, Roger Peter Daniel, won the silver medal for Trinidad and Tobago in Singles 25m Standard Pistol Men's Final event at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range. Mr. Daniel scored 563 points, 7 points shy of the winner Singapore's representative Bin Gai, 570 points. India's representative Samaresh Jung placed third with a score of 559 points.

01: *Mr. Roger Daniel, Commonwealth Games Bronze medallist in The Men's Pairs 50m Pistol.* **02:** *Jamaica's Lerone Ephraime Clarke celebrates after winning Gold as (from left) Trinidad and Tobago's Emmanuel Callender and Aaron Armstrong cross the finish line in the CG 2010 100m dash.* **Photo:** Lawson C. Lovell, PTI

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar meets with Prime Minister David Cameron

On 15th October, 2010, The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister had yet another successful day in London working on behalf not only of the people of Trinidad and Tobago but also on behalf of the people of CARICOM and the Commonwealth as a whole.

The Prime Minister hosted a working lunch with diplomatic representatives of CARICOM Missions in London to listen to and engage them in dialogue on the most pressing issues affecting Member States and their citizens. Chief among the concerns was the Air Passenger Duty (APD), implemented by the United Kingdom government a few years ago and which was set to increase in November 2010, which is viewed by Member States as detrimental to their economies, the reviving of the UK/Caribbean forum and the relevance of the Commonwealth to the Caribbean.

Later, the Prime Minister and her team including Ministers Rambachan and Cadiz, met with the British Prime Minister David Cameron and Foreign Minister Hague at 10 Downing Street.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar raised the issue of the APD, and the significance of the Commonwealth to smaller nations. With regard to the latter, she emphasised the need

to ensure "common wealth" in the Commonwealth, especially since some 700 million people live on $1 US per day. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar also raised the matter of strengthening UK/Caribbean relations.

Both Prime Minister Cameron and Foreign Secretary Hague appreciated the strength of the argument put forward by Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar on the issue of the Air Passenger Duty, and gave a commitment to impress upon the Treasury the need to revisit the level of these duties.

The British leader was keen to show that the Caribbean was important to him and his government and gave the assurance that the UK/Caribbean Forum would be held next year.

On the issue of the Commonwealth, Prime Minister Cameron said he too was keen to support and strengthen the Commonwealth and address some of the issues raised by Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, especially those related to poorer states and the development of children.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar gave the British Prime Minister the assurance that her government was keen to preserve the good relationship of both nations.

Minister Rambachan took the opportunity to discuss the issue of the criteria used by the British Government to assess persons applying for student visas, a matter which has been a concern for students in Trinidad and Tobago for some time. Prime Minister Cameron gave the assurance that Minister Rambachan's concerns would also be addressed.

Following the meeting at Downing Street, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar and her team then headed off to the BBC to partake in a series of interviews and met with a number of Trinidad and Tobago nationals employed at the company.

Pictured: *Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar meeting United Kingdom's Prime Minister David Cameron at 10 Downing Street.* **Photo:** *OPM*

First T&T National in Royal Over-Seas League Annual Scholars Exhibition

AND YET... IN THEIR UNCONTROLLABLE INSANITY... IN THEIR UNFORGIVABLE BLINDNESS... THEY SEEK TO DESTROY THIS BEAUTIFUL ISLAND WITH MURDER AND VIOLENCE...
...THIS TINY BLESSED COUNTRY WHICH MEN CALL JAMAICA!

pictured: *'The Visitor', Spray paint and Acrylic on canvas, 109x100cm, 2009. (a section of* ***Keegan Simon's*** *exhibit series titled 'Greetings from Jahmayker')*

The Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) Annual Scholars Exhibition was held in OXO Tower Wharf, South Bank, London from 6th-24th October, 2010. Mr. Keegan Simon became the first national of Trinidad and Tobago to receive the ROSL Visual Arts Travel Scholarship and the opportunity to be part of this exhibition.

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ODPM charged with coordinating relief efforts for CARICOM Nations on behalf of the GORTT

Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management

At a Media Conference held on November 4th, 2010 to inform the public of Trinidad and Tobago's response to the islands devastated by Hurricane Tomas, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (OPDM) was mandated by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to coordinate and manage relief assistance to the affected Caribbean islands. Consequently, a system was developed to ensure that there is an orderly, transparent and efficient collection, storage, repackaging and onward transmission of all relief items to the affected islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Since then, the Disaster Offices in the respective islands have indicated their various needs.

In the light of this, the ODPM in collaboration with the Foundation for the Enhancement and Enrichment of Life (FEEL), established centres to facilitate the collection of donated goods within Trinidad and Tobago. These centres were located at Warehouse 8B Fernandez Industrial Centre, Eastern Main Road, Laventille.

In an attempt to make the donation of relief supplies to storm-impacted Caribbean neighbours more accessible to all, the ODPM partnered with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) to establish additional centres around Trinidad and Tobago. ADRA is an internationally recognized non-governmental organization working in more than 120 countries whose primary mission is disaster response. ADRA Collection Centres were located at:

Community Services Building, Cnr Gomez and Rushworth Street, San Fernando,

Community Hospital Of SDA, Western Main Road, Cocorite,

Cumana SDA Church, Punch Street, Cumana.

The collection of donations started on Friday 12th November and ended on 3rd December 2010.

For more information contact:

Public Information Education and Community Outreach Unit
868 640 1285 or
publicinformation@odpm.gov.tt
or visit : www.odpm.gov.tt

On November 19th, 2010, two Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard vessels delivered five containers filled with relief aid from Trinidad and Tobago to St Lucia. Three of the five containers had supplies from the Water and Sewerage Authority and the other two contained perishable and non-perishable essentials.

This donation was part of Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar's recently launched Helping Hand Initiative which was set up to establish a framework for emergency aid to the region in the event of inevitable natural disasters.

The Office of the Prime Minister in the person of Special Advisor Gary Griffith continued its relief co-ordination efforts with an additional three containers sent to the Caribbean neighbours later in December 2010.

Surgeons creating new ears for girl from T&T

A team of medics in Scotland is creating new ears for a 15-year-old national from Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Kade Romain was born without ears and missing part of her ear canal leaving her partially deaf. The medical team from the Spire Murrayfield hospital in Edinburgh has undertaken to construct new ears for Kade at no cost so that she will face a brighter future.

Kade travelled to Scotland after meeting Ms. Robina Addison, a Scottish dance teacher, who was visiting the orphanage in 1999 where Kade was living in Trinidad. Ms. Addison in an interview with Ms. Eleanor Bradford, a BBC Scotland Health Correspondent said, "I fell in love with her the first time I saw her because she was such a character".

Ms. Addision said Kade wasn't attending mainstream school because of her disability and instead attending a day care unit for children who are mentally handicapped. Ms. Addison seeing her circumstances said she was inspired to act and applied on young Kade's behalf. A temporary visa was granted for Ms. Addison to travel to Scotland for a very unusual operation.

Dr. Ken Stewart, one of the UK' s top experts in ear reconstruction, said: "We're hoping to produce

an ear which is a very reasonable image of a natural human ear".

"At a conversational distance it wouldn't be obvious that it's a reconstructed ear."

Rib cartilage
Dr. Stewart will construct two new ears for Kade, and she will be fitted with a hearing aid to restore her hearing.

Consultant Ken Stewart explained that in the UK about one in 6,000 children were born with at least one missing ear. "A congenital deformity is the most common cause. Then we see children and adults that have lost an ear or both ears because of trauma or due to skin cancer".

The surgery is normally carried out on the NHS in the UK however as Kade is a foreign national she doesn't qualify for free healthcare. Instead the Spire Murrayfield hospital offered its facilities and the surgical team worked for free.

In a seven-hour operation, Dr. Stewart constructed the first ear, with cartilage taken from Ms. Romain's rib-cage. The cartilage was then trimmed into the shape of an ear which was inserted under a flap of skin where her ear should be. Unused cartilage was inserted back into the cavity in Kade's ribcage, where it will re-form into its original shape.

In a few months, the other ear will be constructed. A week after the first procedure young Kade was already having the stitches taken out. "She took it all in her stride," said Ms. Addison.

"She's the one who made the decision and this time next year she'll be a new person."

In between her visits to hospital Kade is going to school and learning to read and write. When she returns to Trinidad and Tobago she hopes to become a hairdresser or work in a bank.

Kade is said to have already bought her very first pair of earrings.

For more information visit:
www.plasticsurgeryscotland.com

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-11516981

Pictured: *Dr. Ken Stewart examines Ms. Kade Romain's ear.* **Photo:** *BBC*

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The Annual Exhibition is held throughout the year at the London and Edinburgh clubhouses.

Since 2000, ROSL Arts has offered annual Visual Arts Travel Scholarships which enable selected artists to make a study visit or undertake a residency in a Commonwealth country other than their country of origin. The Annual Exhibition aims to give young Commonwealth artists solo and group exhibitions in the UK.

Mr. Simon, as part of the Visual Arts Travel scholarship, undertook a month-long residency at the Partick Allen Fraser Foundation, Hospitalfield in Arbroath, Scotland (www.hospitalfield.org.uk).

About '**Greetings from Jahmayker**' in ROSL Annual Scholas Exhibition brochure, Keegan Simon said, "The artworks I produce are my interpretations of my observations. It incorporates those observations with juxtaposition of 'pop' cultures using both digital traditional collages to create visual coolness. This series is what could be understood as a tourist's views and potential misconceptions of what Jamaica (as an island and its cultural surroundings) could be. Playing on the idiosyncrasies and stereotypical ideals of the general Jamaica culture, the works highlights them as well as shows the influences of Northern American and Asia and what affects it has on the society. Hilarity ensues"

01: *'Off to see the Wizard', Mixed Media on canvas, 138x122cm, 2010.* **02:** *'Wood vs Denim', Mixed Media on canvas, 138x107cm, 2010. (both images are sections of* ***Keegan Simon's*** *exhibit series titled 'Greetings from Jahmayker')*

T&T NATIONAL WINS THE COMMONWEALTH PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The Commonwealth Photographic Awards have been running since the 1990s, but 2010 marked the first year that they were administered by the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS). The theme of last year's competition was 'Science, Technology and Society' and, with more than 200 entries from 36 countries around the world, competition was fierce.

Kimberly Sue, a national of Trinidad and Tobago, was rewarded with the top prize in her category for her image of a young girl dancing to her iPod music in a remote island setting. Photo Competition prizes were awarded to:

Class A (age 18-30)
Gold: Madhabi Das Bhattacharyya, India, age 22
Silver: Zoey Heath, Canada, age 24

Class B (under 18)
Gold: Kimberley Sue, Trinidad and Tobago, age 16
Silver: Tom Niu, Canada, age 16

Bronze awards went to young photographers from India, Canada, Australia and Pakistan.

The Judges panel consisted of photographer Mr. Michael Hallet, journalist Ms. Helen Perry, Commonwealth Scholar and artist Mr. Johan Thom, and Mr. Robert Wooding of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The Young Commonwealth Competitions are supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation.

For more information about the Young Commonwealth Competitions, please contact Ms. Catherine Clark on +44(0)20 7766 9204 or email: catherine.clark@thercs.org

Photos courtesy Ms. Kimberly Sue

01: *Model -* *Ms. Alicia Mathura, student at the Naparima Girls' High School, San Fernando, Trinidad.* **02: *Photographer -*** *Ms. Kimberly Sue*

pictured: *'Left to right: Mr. Brian Woods, Senior Marketing Manager, Angostura EMEAA and other members of Burn Stewart Limited; Ms. Genevieve Jodhan, Executive Manager, Logistics and Supply Chain, Angostura; Mrs. Vidia Persad-Doodnath, Executive Director, Technical Operations of Angostura; Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Counsellor and interim Acting High Commissioner; Mr. Wayne Yip Choy, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Angostura; Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary; and Dr. Doodnath, husband of Mrs. Persad-Doodnath*

Angostura at Annual Royal Warrant Holders Banquet 2010

The Annual Royal Warrant Holders Banquet was held at Grosvenor House in Park Lane, London, on November 4th 2010. Interim Acting High Commissioner, Ms. Roanna Gopaul and Second Secretary, Ms. Nickesha Smith were guests of Burn Stewart Distillers Ltd. at this White Tie event which was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, the Duke of York.

Mrs. Vidia Persad-Doodnath, Executive Director, Technical Operations of Angostura who is the holder of the Royal Warrant for Angostura Bitters, was a special guest at the event which was also attended by Mr. Wayne Yip Choy, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Angostura and Ms. Genevieve Jodhan, Executive Manager, Logistics and Supply Chain.

Royal Warrants are a mark of recognition to individuals or companies who have supplied goods or services for at least five years to HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh or HRH The Prince of Wales. Warrants have always been regarded as demonstrating excellence and quality, and are highly prized.

Celebrating the Festival of Divali 2010

01: *Interim Ag. High Commissioner Roanna Gopaul lights the deyas at the start of the celebrations at the temple.* **02:** *(from right) Shree Krishna Ragbir anoints Mr. Junior Kwabena whilst Pundit Ramesh Charan leads the assembly in a song.* **03:** *(from left) Interim Ag. High Commissioner Roanna Gopaul, TTHC's staff member Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, and a section of the crowd at the function.*

The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London, commemorated the Festival of Divali on Saturday 20th November, 2010 in Maha Lakshmi Vidya Bhavan, Honor Oak Park, London. Over a hundred and fifty of the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora residing in London and surrounding areas, turned out to participate in the event.

The Master of Ceremonies at this years celebrations was Pundit Ramesh Charan. The programme included bhajans sung by Mr. Gobin Dwarika, Mr. Ramoutar Seenath and Mr. Junior Kwabena, prayers to Mother Lakshmi, led by Pundit Ramesh Charan , and discourse from Shree Krishna Ragbir. The following is the feature address delivered on the day by Immigration Attaché Mr. Narinesingh Lal.

Seeta Ram, Namaste, good evening to everyone. I take this opportunity on behalf of the then Ag. High Commissioner and all members of staff at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission to extend a warm and cordial welcome to everyone on our Divali celebrations at this beautiful Temple in Honor Oak Park, Forrest Hill. It is a pleasure for me to say a few words on the significance of Divali.

Deepavalee or Divali as it is more properly called consists of two words "Deep" meaning light and "Avalee" meaning a row. In its ordinary simple sense, Divali is seen as a celebration consisting of rows of lights. Divali commences on the 15th night of the darkest fortnight in the month of "Kaartik" which is within October to November. The month of Kaartik is the darkest month of the year, perhaps the time when light is most needed.

Let us take a closer look at the Deeya. The deeya is made of clay representing our physical bodies in which dwells the immortal, indestructible Divine Spirit known as the Atma. The wick represents our hearts, this wick must be soaked in the fuel of Pure, noble and selfless thoughts before it can be ignited by the light of Divinity. The oil or ghee represents the fuel of our pure thoughts nourishing the frame of a positive mind. Everytime we light a deeya we should pause to reflect on its deep meaning and allow its light, its warmth and its symbolic meaning to be absorbed in our daily lives.

There are four occurrences surrounding the observance of Divali. However, in Trinidad and Tobago, and in the Caribbean, Divali is synonymous with Mother Lakshmee who is the Goddess of Light, wealth and prosperity. She is usually depicted with four hands representing the four goals of human life, which are Dharma

(Righteousness) Artha (Wealth) Kaama (Desires) and Moksha (Salvation or Liberation from this earthly planet).

In praise of Mother Laksmee, this mantra is always recited "Om Siddhi Buddi Prade Devi, Bhukti Mukti Pradaayni, mantra, moortee sada Devi, maha laksmi Namaste". This translates "O Devi, Giver of intelligence, success worldly engagement and liberation. Thou hast the mystic symbols (mantras) as thy form Oh Mother Laksmee, I bow to thee".

Just as this light from the deeya brightens and beautifies this physical plane like our temples and homes, so too we must illumine those around us with the warm glow of kindness, genuine care and love coming from our hearts. Our very nature should mirror the flame of purity and good qualities. The deeya unselfishly shares its light and warmth with the world, so too we must provide selfless service for our fellowmen and share our love with all life forms. To illumine our intellect we must clear from our vision the clouds of ignorance and doubt.

On this auspicious occasion of Divali, let us all endeavour to awake from the slumber of ignorance and become beacons of light and love. May the Supreme light of lights enlighten our understanding and may we all discover the increasing spiritual wealth of the self. My dear friends, it is indeed possible to do so and to quote Mahatma Ghandi he said "I believe it to be possible for every human being to attain that blissful and indescribable state in which he feels within himself the presence of God to the exclusion of everyone else".

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, we are all the children of the Rishis, I thank you for allowing me to say a few words on the significance of Divali which is the celebration of the Triumph of light over darkness, goodness over evil

and wisdom over ignorance. Shubh Divali to everyone. May Mother Lakshmee enrich your lives with the light of wisdom, peace and prosperity.

Om Shanti, Om Shanti, Om Shanti
Hari Om, Tat sat
Jai Maha Lakshmee namah
I thank you all.

above: *Narinesingh Lal, Immigration Attaché delivering the feature address.*

T&T ratifies UNESCO Convention on culture and diversity

Rasmané Ouedraogo, the President of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD), acknowledged the role the Commonwealth Foundation played in the recent announcement that Trinidad and Tobago has endorsed this important convention.

The Foundation partnered with the IFCCD, a leading cultural civil society network, in laying the groundwork for this agreement by co-hosting three regional meetings in Port of Spain in 2007 and, as part of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, again in 2009.

Drawing on The Foundation's 2008 research report, *Putting Culture First*, The Foundation has encouraged collaboration among governments and civil society at the national, regional and international levels to enhance cultural development. Trinidad and Tobago's recent ratification of the convention has been cited as a testament to the success of these efforts.

Mr. Ouedraogo thanked the Commonwealth Foundation for supporting these initiatives. "The UNESCO Convention was intended to counterbalance trade agreements and affirm the sovereign right of countries to promote the expression of their own cultural diversity by adopting appropriate policies and measures," he said.

For more information visit:
www.commonwealthfoundation.com
www.unesco.org

2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific is a legally-binding international agreement that ensures artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own. It was adopted because the international community signalled the urgency for the implementation of international law that would recognise:

- The distinctive nature of cultural goods, services and activities as vehicles of identity, values and meaning;
- That while cultural goods, services and activities have important economic value, they are not mere commodities or consumer goods that can only be regarded as objects of trade.

CELEBRATING EID-UL-ADHA 2010

On Saturday 27th November, 2010, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London, hosted its 6th Annual Eid Celebration.

The proceedings began with the singing of the national anthem, led by Dr. Patrick Williams. The Prime Minister's Eid-ul-Adha message was read by Interim Ag. High Commissioner, Ms. Roanna Gopaul.

The Eid Celebrations continued with the master of ceremonies, Ms. Naaila Azra Mohammed inviting Imam Rasheed Khan to say the opening prayer. Imam Khan was then followed by Mrs. Asela Ibrahim-El Morsy JP LLB who delivered an enlightening feature address. Verses from Al Quran were read by young Miss Farah Anisah Dean and Ms. Zaira Safiya Mohammed closed with the proceeding with the vote of thanks.

01: *Imam Rasheed Khan saying the opening prayer.*
02: *a portion of the sizeable audience that attended Eid-ul-Adha 2010 Celebrations.*

03: *Ms. Farah Anisah Dean reading verses from Al Quran.* **04:** *(from left) Ms. Zaira Safiya Mohammed, Ms. Naaila Azra Mohammed, Imam Rasheed Khan, Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Interim Ag. Commissioner, Mrs. Asela Ibrahim-El Morsy JP LLB and Miss Farah Anisah Dean.*

Photos: Lawson C. Lovell

Foreign Exchange rates for FEBRUARY 2011

CURRENCY	BUYING	SELLING	CASH
Great British Pound	10.1386	10.5593	9.6336
United States Dollar	6.2440	6.4001	6.000
European Euro	8.6397	9.0123	8.1147
Canadian Dollar	6.3519	6.6496	6.1169

Prime Minister meets with the T&T Diaspora in London

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During her inaugural visit to the United Kingdom as Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar held a meeting with nationals of Trinidad and Tobago residing in the UK. The event took place on October 12th, 2010 at the Old Chelsea Town Hall, London and was attended by nationals.

"I intend to lead a government that will build a country that places the highest value on integrity in public life through accountability and transparency," Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar told the spill-over audience of Trinidadians and Tobagonians.

The Hon. Prime Minister reiterated that she would not permit wrongdoing in her administration and spoke of plans of procurement legislation to prevent it.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar told of the planned establishment of a Performance Management Unit, "which will enable me as Prime Minister to review on a timely basis the efficiency and effectiveness of projects of the different ministries." She said, "This will drive my goal of establishing a performance-driven, people-centred philosophy of governance."

The Prime Minister added: "This will ensure that the values of transparency and accountability in the conduct of public affairs will be achieved."

In a wide-ranging address to the hundreds of people at Chelsea Old Town Hall, London, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar said that the Commissioner of Police has a mandate to reduce crime.

"Failure to perform means that he will be terminated," she stressed.

On another matter, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar said efforts would be made to speed up delivery by

01: *(from left)The Hon. Stephen Cadiz, Minister of Trade and Industry, the Hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, Deputy Mayor Councillor Mairghread Condon-Simmonds of Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Dr. the Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and son of Deputy Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.* **02**: *Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar is greeted by Trinidad and Tobago nationals after the meeting in the Chelsea Old Town Hall.* **03:** *Trinidad and Tobago born classical and opera tenor Mr. Neil Latchman is thanked by the Prime Minister for his opera performance.* **04:** *The Prime Minister greets nationals* **05:** *Mr. Garvin Nicholas, the then Press Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister and Mr. Dave Tanco, Financial Advisor.* **06:** *A portion of the crowd at the meeting with the Prime Minister.* **07:** *Dr. the Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and The Hon. Stephen Cadiz, Minister of Trade and Industry.* **08:** *Defence Attaché, Capt. Jeewah Ramoutar guides the Prime Minister to the meeting room.* **09:** *Mr. Lennox Raphael, former member of the political party N.A.R. was invited to say a few words by the Prime Minister.*

Photos: *Donald Michael Chambers, Lawson C. Lovell*

respective Ministries.

Speaking of her constitutional majority in Parliament, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar assured that it "will never be used to frustrate the genuine ambitions of the people nor will it ever be used to suppress freedom of expression."

The Hon. Prime Minister added that in spite of that majority, there would be "fundamental and far-reaching" constitutional changes of fixed dates for both local and general elections, as well as a maximum of two terms for a Prime Minister.

"These are bold decisions and will be done in full consultation with the population," she said.

The Hon. Prime Minister identified some of the successes of her administration and added that her leadership style is "governed by the maxim 'listen before leading'."

She termed the UK-based Trinidad and Tobago nationals as "our vanguard flagbearers" and she urged them to be involved in the country's development.

"Be an agent for Trinidad and Tobago," Mrs. Persad-Bissessar said.

The Prime Minister also addressed matters that impact upon T&T nationals in Britain, most notably the recent introduction of additional taxes on air travel.

The Hon. Prime Minister advised: "We are planning to have serious discussions with the authorities and stakeholders in the United Kingdom to have this tax removed."

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar was lustily applauded throughout her address and received a standing ovation at the end.

Scores of nationals waited to greet the Hon. Prime Minister at the end of the session.

ART EXHIBITION : 'PERSPECTIVES, MEMORY AND DESIRE' AT THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB

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The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS)with the support of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission held an art exhibition from 1st to 22nd October, 2010 which featured the works of three prominent artists from Trinidad and Tobago. **'perspectives, memory and desire', recent paintings by Carlisle Harris, Glenn Roopchand and Kenwyn Crichlow** was first shown at the National Museum and Art Gallery in Port of Spain, Trinidad on 16th March, 2010 to 11th April, 2010.

On 8th October, 2010, a special private viewing and launch was hosted in the RCS to introduce the artists to prospective buyers and artists in the lucrative art community in the United Kingdom.

Master of Ceremonies, RCS

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Director Dr. Danny Sriskandarajah in his welcome speech at the event spoke of the great significance of the exhibition, noting that the exhibition included three Trinidad and Tobago artists of high calibre.

Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Interim Ag. High Commissioner thanked all those who were involved in making the exhibition possible as well as the specially invited guests who attended. Ms. Gopaul, in her address highlighted another great significance; the fact that the art exhibition was taking place at the same time that Trinidad and Tobago was The Commonwealth Chair in Office and The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister was the Commonwealth's first female Chairperson-in-Office. Ms. Gopaul, also made mention and extended best wishes to former Acting High Commissioner Ms. Gail P. Guy who was instrumental in making the exhibition possible in London but was unable to attend the event.

The three artists each echoed the same deep appreciation for the turnout and opportunity to have this exhibition in London. They noted that the exhibition was an edited version of the one which was previously held in Trinidad and Tobago. This they attributed to the cost involved in transporting their artwork.

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The following is an excerpt from the brochure **'perspectives, memory and desire', recent paintings by Carlisle Harris, Glenn Roopchand and Kenwyn Crichlow** to help give a small insight into the three artists and their work.

"Crichlow is an intensely quiet soul who has quite matter-of-factly decided to transform one third of the gallery's walls into an imploding chorus of colour; each painting representing tiny fractions of time, all linked

▶▶ though common strokes. Let us not try to define him, or any of them for that matter, as undoubtedly our references will be skewed and aimed at some sort of external validation of these purely internal instances. Let us instead relish in the moments that these works provide, moments that Crichlow himself likens to jazz improvisations or a "pure" and steady piece of pan music.

Roopchand's affinity with the feminine goes beyond his pronouncements, beyond his use of the circle and other concentric accents, and beyond the textural quality of the work that ignites the desire in us to reach out and touch … every blob or every bead. It is the desire on the part of the artist to jolt our memories; to hone our foci on our true potential through a deeper understanding of the genesis of things. He forces the viewer to put himself into perspectives, as an eye, a lip or a nose is reflected back to us through his use of the mirror and other reflective materials on the canvas… he makes each viewer a part of the image. We see ourselves, within a circle that is representative of life, and of the beginning… and thus we can begin ourselves again. His use of found objects alludes to the fragility of life and the fact that what may be insignificant to one man… may just be another man's entire world.

Harris's concern is form and the importance of the lines that divide us and bring us together again. He is meticulous. His corner of the gallery reminds me of that traditional game we play with those ribbons, ribbons… ribbons. His figures dance on and off the canvas, and from one canvas to another in a seemingly sacred and private ceremony that we have been given the privilege of witnessing. I cannot express the importance of the line as a tool for Harris. It is with it he draws us into his dream-like world, his utopian landscape of regal figures whose energies seem to go beyond the frame of the picture and into the atmosphere that surrounds the work; creating an imagined aura of bliss and security!"

58 x 72 cm. Kenwyn Crichlow. **03:** *Cross Roads 2009, Mixed Media on Hardboard, 46 x 58 cm. Glenn Roopchand.* **A 04:** *Mr. Glenn Roopchand chatting with an old friend.* **05:** *The Sun and Moon Dance in Harmony 2009, Mixed Media on Canvas.* **06:** *Mr. Kenwyn Crichlow autographs his artwork in the 'perspectives, memory and desire' brochure.* **07:** *Mr. Carlisle Harris speaks with a national about his paintings.* **08:** *I will Lead, You will Follow 2008, Acrylic on Canvas, 51 x 51 cm. Carlisle Harris.* **09:** *Strong and Silent Vigil 2008, Acrylic on Canvas, 51 x 51 cm. Carlisle Harris.* **10:** *(from left) Mr. Carlisle Harris, Mr. Glenn Roopchand, Gwen White, RCS Art Curator, Roanna Gopaul, Interim Ag. High Commissioner, Mr. Kenwyne Crichlow, Ms. Mariel Sabga and Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary at the Art Exhibition London.* **Photos:** *Lawson C. Lovell*

01: *Mr. Glenn Roopchand, Mr. Carlisle Harris and Mr. Kenwyn Crichlow address the audience.* **02:** *Heralds of Identity and Estrangement 2010, Oil on Canvas,*

Statement by an IMF Mission to Trinidad and Tobago

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission headed by Ms. Judith Gold, Deputy Division Chief in the IMF's Western Hemisphere Department, issued the following statement on Monday, November 8th, 2010, at the end of its discussions in Port of Spain:

"During the past two weeks, as part of the annual Article IV consultation with Trinidad and Tobago, an IMF team met with government officials and private sector representatives to review recent economic and financial developments and to discuss economic prospects and policies.

After 15 years of positive growth, Trinidad and Tobago was hit hard in 2009 by the global financial crisis, the fall in energy prices, and the collapse of a large financial conglomerate. The country entered this period of crisis from a position of strength, with large fiscal surpluses and low debt, which provided important buffers to help deal with both the external and domestic shocks. The fiscal balance has turned negative, notwithstanding a real decline in expenditure in 2009. Inflation has surged despite weak economic activity, reflecting weather-related increases in food prices, and unemployment has increased sharply, to 6.7 percent in the first quarter of 2010.

Growth is expected to pick up only in 2011, with the near-term risks tilted to the downside reflecting fragile confidence, the weak regional outlook, and global uncertainty. Notwithstanding the expected firming of energy prices, economic prospects over the medium term are weaker compared to the strong growth period preceding the economic crisis.

The 2010/11 budget appropriately adopts an expansionary stance with some additional expenditure and tax incentives to catalyze increased private sector activity and higher domestic and external investments to support a recovery. The government could enhance confidence by accelerating efforts to implement the public sector investment program and addressing arrears to contractors and on VAT refunds. The medium-term challenge is to place debt on a downward trajectory as energy revenues are expected to moderate. A credible framework would contain and reverse the increases in spending on goods and services and on transfers during the boom period, while strengthening the collection of non-energy revenue through improved tax administration.

The challenge for monetary policy is to provide an environment conducive to a non-energy sector recovery in the context of large excess liquidity in the financial system. The mission welcomes the recent policy rate reductions that signal the central bank's commitment to improve credit activity in the economy. The banking system remains robust, with strong capital and profitability notwithstanding increases in non-performing loans which need to be monitored carefully. The government's intervention of a large financial conglomerate in January 2009 avoided contagion but has been costly. The financial sector policy priorities are completing the intervention while containing the fiscal costs; intensifying financial sector supervision; enacting new legislation on insurance, credit unions, and securities; and enhancing the financial safety net.

The mission supports the government's plans for diversification and structural reform. The focus is on investing in physical and human capital to support the development of a knowledge-based economy, improving the business climate including through a one-stop shop for investors, strengthening the public enterprise sector by inviting private sector participation, and accelerating privatization. It will be important to prioritize government investments in support of diversification particularly in view of the increasingly constrained availability of resources. The mission also supports efforts to improve the timeliness and accuracy of economic statistics.

The mission benefited from open and fruitful exchanges with many government and non-government representatives and wishes to express its gratitude for the excellent cooperation and kind hospitality."

For more information visit:
http://www.imf.org

About the IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 187 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.

The IMF's fundamental mission is to help ensure stability in the international system. It does so in three ways: keeping track of the global economy and the economies of member countries; lending to countries with balance of payments difficulties; and giving practical help to members.

T&T and Germany committed to strengthening bilateral relations

Dr. the Honourable Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs met with His Excellency Stefan Schlueter, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany during a courtesy call on 29th October, 2010 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Discussions focused on European-Caribbean relations; and the need for foreign investors and foreign companies operating in Trinidad and Tobago, to exhibit greater corporate social responsibility in the areas of technological advancement and the establishment of youth and sport programmes.

In addition, Trinidad and Tobago's regional agenda; and plans to diversify Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry through the areas of multiculturalism and cultural festivals, wellness tourism, and eco-tourism were also discussed.

The meeting ended cordially with Minister Rambachan and Ambassador Schlueter committing to work together to deepen and strengthen bilateral relations.

T&T Craft Makers - First in Caribbean to receive International Certification

Eight craft trainees of the Export Centres Company Limited (ECCL) were awarded certificates from the UK-based certification body, City and Guilds at a ceremony held at the Hyatt Regency, Port of Spain on 22nd November, 2010.

The Honourable Nizam Baksh, Minister of Community Development delivered the keynote address.

This group of graduates is the first to be formally certified in the area of Craft Training in the Caribbean, following five months of training in the Apprenticeship Phase through the ECCL. Graduates can then move on to the level of Journeyman and then, Master Craft. Twelve persons were also awarded certificates as Assessors and one as an Internal Verifier.

The Export Centres programme is mandated to empower members of village communities and in particular, female heads of households, through the production of craft for the export market.

The Community Development Division selects the trainees and provides the funding for the management and training activities. The revenues from the export of products are deposited in the Consolidated Fund. Centres are located throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The ECCL's main objective is to provide export-specific training for persons who previously received basic training in craft development at the Community Development Division's training or those who benefitted from other relevant training exposure.

Its main targets are members of village communities, particularly female heads of households. The ECCL falls under the purview of the Ministry of Community Development.

Above: *The Hon. Nizam Baksh, Mr. Calvin Maurice, Export Centres CEO and Mr. Ralph Adams, City and Guilds Senior International Manager*

Information - City and Guilds relationship with ECCL

Chronological History

• ECCL Approval to offer City and Guilds International Design and Craft Examinations (IVQ) - September 25 ,2009

• Present examinations approved to offer -
Machine Techniques - Level 1
Curtain Making - Level 2,3
Soft Furnishing Level - 1,2&3
Textile Decoration Level 1 ,2,&3

• Craft courses awaiting approval
Sugar Modeling - Level 1
Sugar Decoration - Level 2&3
Confectionary - Level 1,2
Sugar Flowers - Level 2,3
Patch work and Quilting - Level 1,2
Ceramics Level - 1,2
Leather Level - 1

• To be submitted; Over 18 Craft course areas

• ECCL Staff certification required with City and Guilds;Tutors to be certified as Assessors
Programme Delivery Supervisors to be certified as Internal Verifiers

• ECCL trainee;Upon completion of our craft training and successful assessment would be certified with an International Vocational Qualifications (IVQ).

Minister of Tourism leads World Travel Market Delegation

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The newly appointed Dr. the Honourable Rupert Griffith, Minister of Tourism unveiled his vision for sustainable and environmentally responsible tourism at World Travel Market (WTM) which took place in London on November 11th, 2010.

WTM represented Dr. Griffith's first major visit to the UK following his appointment in May last year. The Honourable Minister led a delegation of representatives, including officials from the Tourism Development Company (TDC) of Trinidad and Tobago, to provide updates on the latest tourism initiatives and developments in the twin-island Caribbean nation.

In addition to Dr. Griffith, the delegation from Trinidad and Tobago included Mr. Oswald Williams, Secretary of Tourism at the Tobago House of Assembly (THA); Mrs. Melba Dedier, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Tourism; Warren Solomon, Tobago's Director of Tourism and Mr. Ernest Littles, President of the TDC. Representatives from various tourism stakeholder associations, including tour operators, hoteliers and small accommodation properties were also on hand to meet with travel trade professionals.

As usual, Trinidad and Tobago's presence at WTM was brimming with colour, culture and excitement. From surprise celebrity guest appearances and steelpan to carnival girls and a chocolatier, the vibrancy of Trinidad and Tobago's people, food and festivals - which include the star-studded Tobago Jazz Experience, the Tobago Heritage Festival, the Tobago Culinary Festival, the Tobago Underwater Carnival, Panyard Sensations, and the world's original and best Carnival – were on show.

Visitors to WTM received updates on important tourism initiatives in Trinidad and Tobago which underpinned the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's government commitment to developing sustainable tourism. These initiatives include:

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The STAR Programme
The STAR programme, a new initiative aimed at creating a culture of consistent service excellence in Trinidad and Tobago, was launched at WTM. The programme will focus on training, development, awareness and education and is aimed at those involved in every level of the tourism experience.

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New flights announced from both British Airways and Virgin in 2011
British Airways has recently announced plans to increase the flight schedule between London Gatwick and Trinidad's Port of Spain, via St Lucia, in March 2011. Flights will increase to daily, up from five flights a week. Virgin Atlantic has also announced plans to increase their number of flights to Trinidad and Tobago. From 31st October 2011, a second weekly flight will operate between London Gatwick and Tobago.

Green Globe
The TDC is also rolling out the Green Globe programme, which supports tourism providers in establishing standards and gaining international certification

around environmentally sustainable operating practices and development. In order to qualify for Green Globe certification, properties must take steps to reduce waste and conserve water and energy.

TTTIC Programme
The TDC has introduced Phase II of a national certification programme which will see the auditing of tourism operators and the introduction of new Villa and Eco-lodge Standards. The Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Industry Certification (TTTIC) – pronounced T-tick – is focused on increasing the competitiveness of Trinidad and Tobago's tourism product through national tourism standards and codes of practice which meet or exceed international benchmarks for best practice.

Tourism Oriented Policing and Protection Services
The TDC recently launched a series of Tourism Oriented Policing and Protection Services (TOPPS) workshops for police officers, customs and excise and immigration officials, and other personnel responsible for security in the tourism and hospitality industry. Ensuring the safety and security of visitors is a top priority of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the TOPPS initiative is part of an aggressive approach to holistic and integrated tourism development.

Agent initiatives
Packed with some fantastic agent initiatives – it can only be Trinidad and Tobago at WTM! The TDC has recently re-launched its trade website - www.takesometimeout.com - which offers exciting new incentives, revamped online training and continually updated offers. Representatives from the TDC will be available to show agents the benefits and encourage sign up for the new scheme.

For more information visit www.gotrinidadandtobago.com
For Trade information visit www.takesometimeout.com

01: *Dr. the Honourable Rupert Griffith, Minister of Tourism addresses the delegation at the WTM reception at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London.* **02:** *Mr. Ernest Littles, President of the TDC at the WTM reception.* **03:** *(from left) Mr. Ricky Hackshow, Head of Hotel and Restaurant in Trinidad, Beverley Awonaya, Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Interim Acting High Commissioner, Ms. Jane West, Account Director of the TDC, UK and Tracy Savary.* **04:** *A view of the Trinidad and Tobago booth* **05:** *WTM celebrity delegates for Trinidad and Tobago Mr. Rudolph Walker, Mr. Dwight Yorke and Steely pan, mascot for Trade (designed by Mahogany).* **06:** *WTM celebrity delegate for Trinidad and Tobago Brian Lara with Poison UK models at the booth.*

Photos: Alafair Celestine

When Steel Talks : The Life work of **Bertie Marshall** directed by **Dalton Narine**

Steelpan pioneer and visionary Bertie Marshall is the subject of this film production by film maker, producer, director, pan man and steelpan historian Dalton Narine. This is a fifty-minute film chronicling the life work of the innovative Mr. Marshall and it is being shared with the global community on When Steel Talks in collaboration with Mr. Narine.

To see view **the film trailer** visit:
http://www.metacafe.com/watch/5279064/bertie_marshall_the_steel_pan_visionary_the_film/

To view **the film** courtesy of *When Steel Talks* visit:
http://www.panonthenet.com/spotlight/2010/bertie_marshall-10-01-10.htm#film

Angostura exhibits T&T rums in **Trinidad Rum Festival** and **UK RUMFEST 2010**

From 9th to 11th September, 2010, the first 'Trinidad Rum Festival' was hosted by Angostura Limited at the House of Angostura, Eastern Main Road, Laventille, Trinidad. It was Angostura's first festival to celebrate the diversity of rum and its rapidly growing popularity. This social occasion was aimed at beverage enthusiasts, rum connoisseurs and those who wished to understand the history of rum and the role this industry has played in Trinidad and Tobago's development. Over the three days, visitors enjoyed free admission to the festival, discovered many fascinating facts about rum, tasted Trinidad and Tobago's finest rums both in drinks and food, viewed rum exhibits and toured the distillery.

In the United Kingdom, on 16th and 17th October, 2010, Angostura represented Trinidad and Tobago at the annual UK RumFest 2010 which is in its fourth year running. UK RumFest is said to be the world's biggest rum festival. Visitors were able to experience diverse flavours, try some of the rarest rums and meet master blenders, distillers and world famous cocktail mixologists from around the world.

For the first time, Angostura held its 'Angotura European Championship' at UK RumFest. All 12 of the "mixologists" had won

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the Angostura cocktail challenge in their respective countries over a period of 6 months and competed for the privilege to represent Europe in the global finals in February 2011 in Trinidad. Each challenger had to present 2 drinks to the judges who scored each drink on Appearance, Aroma, Taste and Presentation Skills. The judges included 2008 Global winner, Ms. Jamie Stephenson; Imbibe magazine spirits editor, Ms. Alice Lascelles and from Angostura in Trinidad, Corporate Communications Manager, the former Miss Trinidad and Tobago and Miss World, Giselle Laronde-West. The 12 finalists included contestants from the UK, Spain, Italy and Russia.

The House of Angostura was established in 1824 when Dr. Johann G.B. Siegert, a German-born surgeon in General Simon Bolivar's army of liberation in Venezuela, developed the formula for aromatic bitters after four years of research

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and experimentation with various barks, herbs and spices from all over the world. After his death in 1870, his family migrated to Trinidad and his sons, Don Carlos and Alfredo C. Siegert founded Angostura. The company exported Angostura bitters and opened up a rum distillery some years later. Angostura first started producing two rums, a white rum and a dark rum. They were White Oak and Old Oak Gold. Today, they carry over 20 rums.

In 1996, The House of Angostura in Trinidad opened its doors to the public by inaugurating a museum on the company's premises in Laventille. The museum depicts the history of the company in the context of Trinidad and Tobago's and the region's past.

For more information visit: www.angostura.com, www.rumfest.co.uk

01: *Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Interim Ag. High Commissioner is presented with the new Angostura Single Barrel rum by Ms. Giselle Laronde-West, Angostura's Corporate Communications Manager.* **02:** *Ms. Giselle Laronde-West, Angostura's Corporate Communications Manager next to the Angostura products display in the High Commission.*

Kes The Band, Joe Brown At **WORLD EXPO SHANGHAI 2010**

Expo Shanghai 2010 experienced the power of Trinidad and Tobago's music ambassadors in late September when international entertainer Kees Diefenthaler and his group Kes The Band, Maximus Dan, Rikki Jai and Nadia Batson performed at the Trinidad and Tobago booth. The sounds of soca, chutney and rapso were on full display in China onstage at the CARICOM Pavilion.

The local entertainers were the major acts featured during Trinidad and Tobago week, which ran from September 19th to 26th at the Pavilion, where the Trinidad and Tobago Booth was located. The week featured

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a number of activities including local food, product displays and sales, carnival costume displays, etc. Trinidad and Tobago Week was designed to highlight the various aspects of Trinidad and Tobago's culture for visitors and participants at the Expo.

In addition, Chef Joe Brown joined the delegation to prepare authentic Trinidad and Tobago food, which was featured at the Trinidad and Tobago Business Forum that took place on September 27th at the Sofitel Hotel in downtown Shanghai. Hosted by Eteck, the Forum involved presentations from a range of agencies on doing business and investing in Trinidad and Tobago. Invitees to the Forum included some of the major businesses in Shanghai along with key members of the Trinidad and Tobago chamber and other business associations.

For more information visit: http://www.tradeind.gov.tt

01: *International Fine Food restaurant Chef/owner Joe Brown.* **02:** *Kes the Band: Dieffenthaller brothers Hans, Kees, Jon and best friend Riad Boochoon.*

The Commonwealth Fair 2010

The Commonwealth Countries League's annual Commonwealth Fair was held on Saturday 13th November, 2010 at Kensington Town Hall, Horton Street, London. The doors opened to the public at 11:30 am. The programme for the event included an opening speech delivered by His Excellency Mr. Wajid Shamsul Hasan, High Commissioner of Pakistan, followed by the Presentation of the Fair by Mrs. Zasina Wajid Hasan, Fair Chairwoman and thanks by Patron of the 2010 Fair, Mrs. Babli Sharma, wife of Commonwealth Secretary General Mr. Kamalesh Sharma. Princess Helena Moutafian MBE Dst.J, Patron CCL, closed the official proceedings with a thank you to supporters of the Fair.

During the afternoon period, there was a Fashion show - 'Beauties of the Commonwealth' organised by Ms. Angela Cox, Director Miss Trinidad and Tobago UK. The Fair's entertainment was provided by DJ Blondie, Kiribatu Tungaru Dance Group, the Fiji Dancers and music by Tony Charles Steel Orchestra. Especially for the younger attendees, there was story-telling and dance by First Impression- a Caribbean young people's dance troop.

The Fair closed with a sing along, 'Dil Dil Pakistan' shortly after the annual Grand draw whose prizes included a pair of Economy Class travel tickets on British Airways donated by Masterfare, an oval Ruby and Diamond set Gold pendant and chain donated by SOCA and BGI Gem Laboratory and the President's Hamper donated by CCL's President, Mrs. Louisa Service, amongst others.

At the event dignitaries in attendance included The Worshipful the Mayor and Mayoress of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Councillor and Mrs. James Husbands and H.E. Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary General.

For more information please visit: www.ccl-int.org

01:*(from left) Mrs. Romaine Maharaj, Ms. Claudia Cupid and Ms. Salis Argallon, Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London (TTHC) Staff members setting up the Trinidad and Tobago stall at the Commonwealth Fair.* **02:***(from left) Mrs. Donna Philip-Forde, Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, TTHC Staff members and Mrs. Avril Ramkissoon serve patrons to the stall.* **03:***(from left) Louisa Service OBE, President CCL, Mrs. Sharon Farquharson, Bahamas, 2010 Fair Deputy Chairlady, Mrs. Zerina Wajid Hasan, Pakistan, Fair Chairlady; H.E. Mr. Wajid Shamsul Hasan, High Commissioner for Pakistan, Mrs. Indira Jayasinghe, Sri Lanka, Fair Deputy Chairlady; Majorie Rennie,Chair CCL and Fair Co-ordinator.*

Photos: Alafair Celestine

Annual Students Christmas Party

(above) Some of students formed impromptu bands to sing karaoke in Annual Students' Christmas Party.

The High Commission hosted its Annual Students' Christmas Reception on Friday 10th December 2010. There are two hundred and four students currently registered with the High Commission, the majority of whom are on government scholarships. Approximately ninety-seven students were able to attend the reception.

The students were welcomed to the event by the Second Secretary, Ms. Nickesha Smith who then introduced the High Commissioner, H.E. Garvin Nicholas. The event served as the High Commissioner's first official engagement with the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora in the United Kingdom, having assumed office on December 5, 2010. The High Commissioner took the opportunity to update students on the Government's plans for the youth of Trinidad and Tobago as well as to encourage them to return to Trinidad and Tobago upon the completion of their studies and use their newly acquired skills to continue to develop and build our beloved country.

Having spent time in the United Kingdom as a student himself, the High Commissioner noted that he was keen to make the High Commission more relevant to students in the United Kingdom, especially given the fact that for many, this was their first time away from home. He reminded students that they were regarded as Trinidad and Tobago's academic and cultural ambassadors who fly our flag in the universities they attend and also expose the rest of the world to the academic brilliance and cultural melting pot that represents Trinidad and Tobago. He also commended those students who have been attempting to bring glimpses of Trinidad and Tobago's culture, notably Carnival, to their universities.

The High Commission was pleased with the number of students attending the reception as it provided an opportunity for all students, old and new, to network, share coping measures and to form friendships. It also provided both the Mission's staff and students with the opportunity to put names to faces.

A fun evening was planned and executed where students were treated to the customary "Trini" Christmas dishes of Pastelles, Ham, Pelau, Roti, Curry, Black cake and Sorrel Drink.

Following dinner, the entertainment included a steel pan performance by scholar Mr Jamal Glynn, karaoke and some competitive games of allfours which were enjoyed immensely by all present.

The High Commission continues to encourage all nationals currently studying in the United Kingdom **to register with the Mission** if they haven't already done so. Registration forms can be downloaded from the High Commission's website at: **www.tthighcommission.co.uk/forms.html**

T&T NATIONALS WIN THREE BEFFTA AWARDS

Photos: Lawson C. Lovell, Alexis Shepard

Black Entertainment, Film, Fashion, Television and Arts (BEFFTA) Awards Ceremony honoured and rewarded outstanding achievements and contributions from Africans, Caribbean and Asians in entertainment, film, fashion, television and arts industry globally.

The glamorous black tie event took place on 30th October 2010 at Central Hall Westminster - The Great Hall, Storey's Gate, London. There were a host of African, Caribbean and Asian personalities within the industry in attendance. The voting was open to anyone residing in the UK and ROI. Trinidad and Tobago nationals who were nominated and won were Ms. Alafair Celestine (pictured) - **Best Events Presenter** and Ms. Greta Mendez - **Best Dance Choreographer** as well as **Best Art Director**.

Other Trinidad and Tobago nationals who were nominated were: Wendel Clement (Poison UK) - Best Events Promoter, Karen Salandy - Best Make -up Artist, Reuben Joseph - Best Fashion Choreographer, Alafair Celestine - Best Former Beauty Queen, Rudolph Walker - Best Actor.

01: ***Ms. Alafair Celestine*** *proudly displays her BEFFTA Award for Best Events Presenter.* **02:** ***Ms. Greta Mendez*** *proudly displays her second BEFFTA Award for Best Art Director.*

Minerva Odette Pamela Singh OBE

Minerva Odette Pamela Singh was born in Port of Spain in July 1943 to her parents Bertie and Lorna (nee Niamool) Temull. Pamela Singh, upon graduating from St. Joseph's Convent, San Fernando, moved to London in 1963 to study medicine. This degree in Medicine was changed to Education due to her wanting to focus on her family commitments, her two young sons.

Minerva Odette Pamela Singh OBE was described as a 'pioneer' for working with parents and families to support them in their roles - as parents and carers.

For some thirty years Mrs. Pamela Singh has been involved in Primary Education. In July 2004 after 15 years of service at Pope John Roman Catholic Primary School in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Mrs. Singh retired from her post as Head Teacher. Pope John Roman Catholic Primary School was a fore runner of the "Healthy School program" as drinking water was provided in classrooms, fresh fruit snacks for pupils and a healthy diet were all part of the schools provision since 1990. The Healthy School Program helps to ensure that the school environment is a healthy, comfortable, and productive place for learning (For more information visit - http://home.healthyschools.gov.uk).

Mrs. Pamela Singh was always aware of the need to provide for the individual needs of pupils and families. This was in part the basis for the award of the OBE in 7th January 2005 and the "Pro Ecclesia et Pontfice" from Pope John Paul 11 in 10th July 2004.

Throughout Mrs. Singh's career, she kept abreast of the many educational changes and initiatives from the 'Foundation Stage' to upper end of the 'Key Stage Two'. She ensured that constructive links with the Secondary Phase supported transition for Pope John Roman Catholic Primary School's pupils. Mrs. Singh enjoyed the support she was able to give to leadership and management to raise and maintain standards of achievement and attainment.

(Foundation Stage 1 - pre-school/childcare environment such as Nursery between the ages 3 and 4. Foundation Stage 2 - the Reception class of an Infant or Primary school between the ages 4 and 5. It is also known as Key Stage 0 to fit in alongside key stages 1 to 4.)

Mrs. Singh's attention to Continuous Professional Development and attendance at a variety of In-Service Education of Teachers (INSET) events supported her ability to share best practice in School Review and School Self Evaluation with many colleagues.

Since her retirement, Mrs. Singh has worked with the Education Service of the Westminster Catholic Diocese, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Hertfordshire and the London Borough of Camden to support a number of schools in a variety of ways:

- Leadership and Management - Senior Leaders

- Middle Management Leaders
- Subject Leaders
- School Review and Self Evaluation - supporting schools with SEF 5 and SEF 48 and other school documentation.
- Teaching and Learning - Joint monitoring of lessons in order to 'coach' and support subject leaders in CPD development as well as to raise standards by effective subject management and preparation for Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) and to ensure that the Every Child Matters agenda is firmly embedded in a quality curriculum provision.

Since her retirement, Pamela Singh has continued to support schools as a Consultant Advisor in Education for the Diocese of Westminster and does voluntary work on several committees - local and international.

Mrs. Singh is still very passionate about Education in the widest sense. She believes "everyone has a entitlement to fulfill their potential according to their abilities and individual capacity," as such "every individual has an entitlement to the opportunities that allow them to use their gifts and talents to have a positive impact on society".

(pictured) ***Minerva Odette Pamela Singh OBE*** *receiving her award, an OBE from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for her work in Education and in the Community on the 7th June 2005.*

Photos: courtesy British Ceremonial Arts Ltd. and Pamela Singh OBE

PROSTATE CANCER

Photo: Lawson C. Lovell

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. 36,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year. 250,000 men are currently living with the disease.

Prostate cancer can develop when cells in the prostate gland start to grow in an uncontrolled way. In most cases this is a slow growing cancer that men will be unaware of throughout their lifetime because it may never cause any symptoms or problems. However, some men will have a fast growing cancer that needs treatment to prevent or delay it spreading outside the prostate gland.

Signs of a problem with the prostate can include needing to urinate more often, especially at night, and needing to rush to the toilet. Other signs are having difficulty to pass urine, a weak flow and a feeling that your bladder has not emptied properly. Some of these symptoms can be embarrassing and this is why men are reluctant to visit a doctor. However, the earlier prostate cancer is detected, the less likely it is to have spread to the bones.

African Caribbean men are three times more likely to develop prostate cancer than white men. In the past few years, The Prostate Cancer Charity has worked with African Caribbean communities to raise awareness of prostate cancer and the heightened risk of prostate cancer for African Caribbean men.

In a new development to expand The Charity's work with this high-risk population, the Charity has appointed its first Support and Information Specialist Helpline Nurse to work specifically with African Caribbean communities. Mr. Suresh Rambaran, a national of Trinidad and Tobago, one of the Charity's Support and Information Specialist Helpline Nurses spends two days a week within African Caribbean communities around the UK.

Mr. Rambaran in this community-based role brought his expert knowledge in prostate cancer and nursing skills to the nationals meeting to help raise community awareness. For more information about prostate cancer and The Prostate Cancer Charity visit : www.prostate-cancer.org.uk or call the Charity's Helpline: 0800 074 8383 or 02082227622 (England) or 01413140050 (Scotland).

(above) *Mr. Suresh Rambaran at the Nationals' Meeting in October.*

World Diabetes Day

Photo: Lawson C. Lovell

(pictured) *Mrs. Roxanne Crosby-Nwaobi, at Nationals' Meeting in November 2010.*

The World Diabetes Day (WDD) campaign slogan for 2010 was 'Let's take control of diabetes. Now' and sought to:

- Raise awareness of the warning signs of diabetes and promote action to encourage early diagnosis
- Raise awareness of and promote action to reduce the main modifiable risk factors for type 2 diabetes
- Raise awareness and promote action to prevent or delay the complications of diabetes.

Some of the **warning signs** of diabetes include frequent urination, excessive thirst, weight loss, vomiting and stomach pain (often mistaken as the flu), slow-healing wounds and a tingling sensation or numbness in the hands or feet. These can be mild or absent in people with **type 2 diabetes**. If you show these signs, seek medical attention!

There are many **risk factors** for **type 2 diabetes**. They include:

- Obesity and overweight - Lack of exercise
- Previously identified glucose intolerance - Unhealthy diet
- Increased age - A family history of diabetes
- High blood pressure and high cholesterol - history of gestational diabetes

Ethnicity - higher rates of diabetes have been reported in Asians, Hispanics, Indigenous peoples (USA, Canada, Australia) and African Americans.

If you think you are at risk of type 2 diabetes, get tested!

On World Diabetes Day, the Ministry of Health called on all citizens to:

- Know the signs and symptoms of diabetes. Early diagnosis saves lives.
- Diabetes prevention and treatment is simple and cost-effective. Put it on top of the agenda.
- Your child could be affected.

- Know the warning signs. See your doctor to measure the risk.
- Enjoy an active life and prevent complications.

Background Information
Diabetes, hypertension and other chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCDs) are increasing rapidly in the developing world. The prevalence and mortality rates of CNCDs in the Caribbean are among the highest in the world. CNCDs account for 2/3 of deaths in Latin America and the Caribbean region. It is estimated that the number of diabetics in Latin America and the Caribbean is 20 million. In the Caribbean region the prevalence of diabetes is more common in females than in males.

In Trinidad and Tobago 1 in 8 (may be 1 in 5) of all adults has diabetes. Diabetes is more prevalent in the East Indian group than other ethnic groups. 33% of African patients attending the public health facilities are both diabetic and hypertensive.

According to the Population and Vital Statistics Reports, Central Statistical Office (CSO), the deaths due to diabetes as a percentage of total deaths in Trinidad and Tobago is as follows:

Year	% of total deaths in T&T
1997	12.2%
1998	12.6%
1999	13%
2000	13.6%

For more information and support visit: www.diabetes.org.uk, www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk, www.news.gov.tt/index.php?news=6013

The Nationals Meetings

On the 27th October, 2010, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London hosted the monthly nationals meeting. The then Ag. Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Ms. Roanna Gopaul in her opening remarks informed nationals of the various up-coming events in the months of November and December.

On the night Mr. Suresh Rambaran from The Prostate Cancer Charity raised awareness about the cancer amongst nationals. The newly established organisation Helping Angels followed the question and answer segment of Mr. Rambaran's presentation. Helping Angels is a charitable organisation which will focus its energies on assisting children with learning disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago. Helping Angels will engage the national community in exploring, researching and sharing appropriate tools, skills and information in Trinidad and Tobago. For more information contact: email: info@helpingangels.org or call 02033711491.

Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, staff member in Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism Department on the 24th November, 2010 chaired the monthly nationals meeting hosted in the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London. Mrs. Awonaya delivered news, information and thanked nationals for their support in previous events.

On the night Mrs. Roxanne Crosby-Nwaobi, a post graduate student currently reading for Ophthalmic Diabetes Ph.D in King's College London was at the Nationals' Meeting in November raising awareness of diabetes.

Following the question and answer segment of Mrs. Crosby-Nwaobi diabetes presentation, Ranger Gerard A. Placide shared his An inspirational life story. Coming from a musical background, Gerard Placide began his quest as a soloist at age 3. He spoke about his life challenges and experiences which have inspired and motivated him to aspire and achieve his goals. Ranger Placide now resides in Atlanta, Georgia and served as a Minister of Music at his former church, The Cathedral at Chapel Hill where the late Bishop Earl Paulk was overseer. He also served as a soldier in the United States Army 3rd Infantry Division at Ft. Stewart, GA.

In 2001, Gerard became the first Caribbean national to win the acclaimed title of the McDonald's

(above) *The then Ag. Commissioner, Ms. Roanna Gopaul greets Ranger Placide.*

Photo: Lawson C. Lovell

Gospel Soloist Award. He again won the title in 2002 becoming the first non-American to hold this title for two consecutive years in the New York (NY) metropolitan area. This feat, however, was only the beginning of Gerard's many achievements. Later that year, Gerard went on to release his first album (traditional gospel) at the historical Baptist Temple in Brooklyn, NY where his friend and brother in Christ, the godfather of gospel, the late Reverend Timothy Wright was the opening act.

Ranger Placide has had the privilege to sing for such luminaries as Her Majesty the Queen in London through Chances for Children under the patronage of President of the U.N. 57th. General Assembly H.E. Julian Robert Hunte and President Barack Obama.

For more information on Ranger Placide please visit: http://www.gerardplacide.com

T&T DIASPORA FILM FESTIVAL, LONDON

On the 29th September, 2010, The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London partnered with the Trinidad and Tobago Film Company Limited to showcase local films not previously screened in the UK market to nationals and the wider Diaspora community at the monthly nationals meeting. Former Ag. High Commissioner Ms. Gail P. Guy chaired her final monthly nationals meeting with feature guest Ms. Carla Foderingham, CEO of Trinidad and Tobago Film Company.

An opening prayer was said by Trinidad and Tobago national, Mr. Austin Alleyne before start of the festival. The festival provided an opportunity for nationals to gain more information on the growth and development of the national industry, existing Film programmes and investment opportunities. The first Diaspora Film Festival was held in New York at the Consulate General offices on Friday 25th June 2010.

"Dark Tales from Paradise", a new Trinidad and Tobago feature film, made its world premiere at the opening of the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival 2010 on September 22nd. Produced by the Trinidad and Tobago Film Company, Dark Tales from Paradise comprises three separate, though thematically linked episodes.

The first episode is Ryan Khan's **"The Midnite Affair"**, about an American folklorist named Kevin who comes to Trinidad with his girlfriend, Jessica. During Carnival Kevin meets Charlie, a seductive lounge singer. Yet things are not as they seem. Soon Kevin discovers the stories he's read about local folklore characters aren't simply harmless legends.

"Sweet T&T", the film's second episode, was written and directed by Andre Johnson. It tells the story of Sherry, an Englishwoman on vacation with her Trinidadian boyfriend, Anton. After Sherry goes missing, Anton receives a call demanding a ransom for her return. With the help of a bloodthirsty friend he sets out to recover Sherry. Little does Anton know, however, the shock that awaits him.

Finally, in **"Radica"**, written by Francis Escayg and co-directed by Escayg and Timmy Mora, a fishing village is thrown into turmoil after a series of suicides. Superstitious residents blame the unavenged spirit of a murdered young woman. A psychiatrist comes to the village to get to the bottom of the matter, but the terror has only just begun.

For more information on films screened at T&T Film Festival in Trinidad please visit: www.trinidadandtobagofilmfestival.com

01: *(from far right) Former Ag. High Commissioner Gail P. Guy, Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Counsellor, Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary and Ms. Carla Foderingham.* **02:** *National Ms. Jenelle Ross-Mc Intyre were among the nationals who participated in engaging question and answer segment.*

01: *Interim Ag. Commissioner Ms. Roanna Gopaul with (from left) Ms. Aviva Pierre, Ms. Hazel-Ann Brown, and Ms. Simone Bello of the Helping Angels organisation.* **02:** *H.E Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner, making the presentation of a door prize to one of the lucky students at the Annual Student's Christmas Party whilst in the (at left) background Mr. Gavin Baker, Information Systems Manager in the TTHC look on.* **03:** *Some students at the Annual Student's Christmas used some fancy signs for an allfours game, identifying where the jack was maybe?* **04:** *Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, TTHC staff member and nationals in the Christmas spirit at the Nationals Christmas Party held in the High Commission.*